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Homemade : an exploratory study on the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development

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Homemade: An Exploratory Study on the Impact of Cooking on Family Relationships and Cultural Identity Development

ABSTRACT

This mixed-method study investigates the role of cooking in family relationships and cultural identity development. Through an online survey, 275 participants assessed the perceived relevance and usefulness of cooking. Participants evaluated both whether or not cooking altered their level of connection to family and culture as well as how family relationships and cultural identity were impacted.

The findings demonstrate three primary reasons participants cook: to feed themselves and others, to bring people together, and to show care. The study suggests that cooking can be a vehicle of connection to both family and culture. Participants with a more recent family immigration history feel a stronger connection to *culture* through cooking while participants who have had more previous family generations living in the United States feel a stronger connection to *family* through cooking. In addition, the findings found that those who more often cook meals native to their culture, feel more positively toward that culture, and vise versa. Also, the more participants cooked with their parents during childhood, the more positive their attitude toward their family.

Major themes about cooking's impact on family include: reflection of family dynamics, opportunity to connect, tangible care, means of feeling appreciated, place for communication, marker of child development, definition of roles, stress point, and a holder of memory and tradition. Major themes about cooking's impact on cultural identity include: measurement of identification, learning tool, manifestation of value systems, description of history, place of pride and connection, way to redefine culture, and bridge to other cultures.

HOMEMADE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

ON THE IMPACT OF COOKING ON FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

AND CULTURAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT

A project based upon an independent investigation,
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Social Work.

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To Daddy and Bon, thank you for raising me in and being a part of a compelling home where I learned the power of family connections, the beauty of my culture, and the delight of home-cooked food. To my mom, though no longer physically here, you continue to nourish my soul daily.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Tables

LIST OF FIGURES

Figures

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that you are what you eat. What we take in and experience, both literally and figuratively, shapes who we are. The very basis of psychotherapy is rooted in similar concepts, emphasized by Sigmund Freud: the unconscious, symbolism, and life experiences leading up to current state of being. In addition to what is contained within a person, social workers assert that we must pay attention to the environmental factors that envelop a person. People and their experiences transform and are transformed by surrounding systems, notably our family and cultural contexts. Thus, if the old adage is true that we are what we eat, then is it possible that cooking, the process of preparing what we eat, can reveal insights about our relationship with the formative contexts of family and culture?

American food writer, activist, and professor, Michael Pollan states, "Cooking is all about connection, I've learned, between us and other species, other times, other cultures (human and microbial both), but, most important, other people. Cooking is one of the more beautiful forms that human generosity takes; that much I sort of knew. But the very best cooking, I discovered, is also a form of intimacy." (Pollan, 2013, p. 415) This intimacy implies a close bond and deep understanding of and between people. This is what clinical social work beckons us to do within a therapeutic relationship as we strive for the wellbeing of a person, family, or community.

Though there is a gap in social work literature regarding the psychodynamic and therapeutic implications of cooking, this research study sets out to investigate the narrative nature and clinical potential of cooking. It will explore how cooking affects family relationships and an individual's perception of these relationships, as well as how cooking affect the development of cultural identity. Using a mixed-method study, I hope to find more specific areas of research and assess the potential value and role of cooking in connecting people to their families and culture.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study is to add to research around the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. The current literature researching cooking in the field of social work related to mental, emotional, and psychosomatic wellbeing is minimal. The large majority of cooking related literature consists of studies from the field of health and nutrition, marketing and consumer affairs, and social sciences. Also, while this literature review focuses on cooking, it is important to note that the majority of current literature surrounding similar topics looks at the impact of food and food consumption but have largely ignored the process leading up to consumption of these foods. If mentioned, it is often as a secondary part of the study. This chapter will topically organize existing research on cooking and provide an overview of major themes in order to point out areas where more exploration and understanding is needed.

Cooking as a part of physical health

Rather than discussing the psychological aspects of cooking and eating, the literature will often take a distinct but related direction by exploring the relationship of food and preparation to diet, weight, physical health, and nutrition. Studies look at the psychosocial factors and health practices influencing specific demographic such as race (Walcott-McQuigg, Sullivan, Dan, & Logan, 1995), class (Swanson et al., 2011), age and gender (Hughes, Bennett, & Hetherington,

2004). These studies show that race and class have some bearing on access to fresh and healthy foods, cooking tools and space, and time to make home-cooked meals; age and gender influence cooking knowledge and food preferences. Aligned with these findings, Engler-Stringer (2009) and Henson, Blandon & Cranfield (2010) discuss that demographic factors also change the relative difficulty of achieving recommended cooking guidelines for health.

Neale, Nettleton, Pickering, & Fischer (2011) report an improvement around linked diagnoses of eating disorders and substance abuse among heroin users who regularly cooked or ate cooked meals as opposed to bought ready-made or fast food meals. They found that among those who cooked, "there was evidence of better dietary habits and therefore presumably better nutritional health among those in residential settings (where food was provided and mealtimes were organized) and in recovery (when interest and pleasure in eating often returned and food preparation and consumption became more sociable, creative, and satisfying pastimes" (p. 639).

Cooking is also used a part of physical therapy and occupational therapy as studied by Gigliotti, Jarrott, & Yorgason (2004) and Melton (1998). Studies found that it helps to maintain muscle strength, flexibility, and body awareness (Berenbaum, 2008). Yantz, Johnson-Greene, Higginson, & Emmerson (2010) discuss the use of cooking as a part of rehabilitation of stroke patients through neuropsychological treatment. Because the increasing understanding that physical and mental health are intertwined as verified by Lakhan & Vieira (2008) and Kim et al. (2012), it is becoming more important for research to look at holistic approaches to therapy and how they can change various aspects of a person's life. Therefore, it will be important to understand why cooking as a tangible act toward physical health is linked to the improvement of psychosocial wellbeing of a person and the potential role in a person's family relationships and cultural identity development.

Cooking as a creative endeavor

Cooking is noted as part of the arts with potential for creative therapy interventions (Clément, Tonini, Khatir, Schiaratura, & Samson, 2012 and Dahl & Moreau, 2007). Clément, Tonini, Khatir, Schiaratura, & Samson (2012) compare music and cooking and propose that music intervention seems to be more effective than cooking interventions in improving the emotional state of patients with Alzheimers. However, this study advises that these two activities share many similar features such as eliciting strong pleasurable sensations and create opportunities for collaboration. Because this study only used interventions for a relatively short period of time and studied a fairly small number of participants, it may be helpful to continue further research around cooking therapy.

Dahl & Moreau (2007) discuss the significance of constrained creative experience such as cooking by recipe with an expected outcome. They state "motivations included the desire for learning, engagement, and relaxation, self-identity, public accomplishment, and community" (p. 367). However, they note the significance of giving instruction but allowing the freedom to create an individualized product. In summary, like many other art forms, cooking – even with limitation – can be a place for personal development and expression, as well as connection to others through communication of self and shared activity time. Artistic endeavor embody the process of personal identity development in which a person imbibes specific given value systems from caregivers and environment and slowly transforms and expresses it to a unique, personal way of being; thus, cooking is a way to take in expectations, create identity within and then externally express it; this process is very similar to the process of personal identity development and can be translated to both the family and cultural arena.

Cooking and family

Families teach cooking as a life skill. Some studies have used cooking as a part of learning everyday tasks and functioning, and thus, improving mental health through increased autonomy and skills, as well as boosting a belief in one's sense of their own capabilities and self-worth. This method is implemented as a part of several health promotion and education programs for youth and families (Quinlan, Kolotkin, Fuemmeler, & Costanzo, 2009; Borden et al., 2012; Condrasky, Williams, Catalano, & Griffin, 2011; Block et al., 2012; Lukas & Cunningham-Sabo, 2011). Quinlan, Kolotkin, Fuemmeler, & Costanzo (2009) found participants of an overweight youth camp "reported significant improvements in multiple aspects of psychosocial functioning, with the greatest improvements occurring with respect to body esteem and emotional functioning" (p. 140) after learning to cook for themselves. These programs were also used to promote autonomy for children, youth and young adults (Thonney & Bisogni, 2006). As a part of child development, they learned practical cooking skills to feed oneself, social skills, how to make decisions, and self-expression. Höijer, Hjälmeskog, & Fjellström (2011) report on a school program's and teacher's effort to take on the task of caring for children who come from a 'deficient home.' This points to potential role cooking can play in a child-parent relationship. This includes the assumed role of care through literal nourishment and skill coaching around how to feed oneself.

Ball & Brown (2012) studied the significance of dinner groups for college students; the research says, "Confidence can be increased through repeated practice in cooking and observation of and encouragement from other participants," and "eating dinner together created a kind of a family atmosphere" (p. 33). Tamis-LeMonda, Briggs, McClowry, & Snow (2009)

found that cooking is a location to continually negotiate maternal control and sensitivity as a part of parenting, behavioral adjustment, and maturation in early childhood. Thus, in many ways, these formal programs and informal gatherings involving cooking take on an aspect of parenting and creating a social, family like environment.

Markers of inclusion and exclusion within the family. O'Connell (2010) and Chen (2010) both explore the concept of bodily memory and its relationship with food. Both note that food and our relationship with food negotiate the boundaries between separation and integration within nuclear families and what helps a person define him/herself. The body holds sensory memories is a significant location for recollection of past experiences of family connection. Thus, food processes such as the act of cooking and eating can be an important medium for symbolic inclusion or exclusion. Lyon, Sydner, Fjellström, Janhonen-Abruquah, & Schröder (2011) and Jingxiong et al. (2007) would attribute these recurrent memories to family food habits that are not only passed down from the nuclear family but are also a legacy formed over multiple generations. Jingxiong et al. (2007) studied three-generation households in China. Grandchildren's eating habits are "colored by their own [grandparents] experience of poverty, the conception that obesity is a sign of health"; grandparents communicate and grandchildren understand prepared food as love and care, and used it as a reward. This article supports the relational and transferrable nature of food preparation and consumption. Therefore, as explored by Brady (2011), cooking and food can be an enlightening method of gathering clinical information rather than just an anthropological part of a person's approach to living. They propose cooking is a form of autoethnography and collective biography, and understanding a person's cooking and relationship with food can elucidate their own thoughts about self and relationship with others.

Multiple purposes within family. Daniels, Gloreeux, Minnen, & van Tienoven (2011) and Sidenvall, Nyahl, & Fjellstöm (2000) discusses that the meaning of cooking will alter according to meal context and people involved. While cooking is definitely seen as a chore, preparing food has a noteworthy social aspect as well. Sidenvall et al. (2000) state, "The whole procedure of preparing a meal could be seen as preparing a gift. […] In this procedure, four components were identified: finding out what to serve, cooking with fresh ingredients, presenting the gift in a beautiful manner, and enjoying the gift in commensality" (p. 409) Daniels et al. (2011) note that is particularly true for cohabitating couples, and even moreso couples with children. This emphasizes cooking as an accessible instrument for family connection.

Cooking and culture

Gender roles and expectations. A common theme is the interaction of domestic cooking and eating with gender roles and concepts of masculinity and femininity as studied by Gvion (2011), Fürst (1997), Locher et al. (2010), Yeung (2010), and Harrell (1995). These articles discuss how the role of cooking is defined by our upbringing and can become a large part of one's gender identity. Locher et al. (2010), quotes previous literature by Devault: "women, especially, may view food and eating activities as central to their identities and as primary means of expressing their care for others" (p.972) Increasingly, there are studies focused on the function of cooking in the lives of men such as a study by Kulberg, Björklund, Sidenvall, & Aberg (2010). This looks at three dominant approaches of cooking as pleasure, cooking as a need, and food is served. While many articles propose that cooking is a vehicle of oppression for women, Arnfred (2007) and Swinbank (2002) present ways that cooking is a place of empowerment and a way to negotiate the politics of gender, identity, and power. Arnfred (2007)

states “Control of food is power, but is also an obligation to generosity.” If the above assertions about the role of cooking in shaping gender identity and attitude toward this identity are true, it is important to further explore how cooking may affect and be affected by our first context, the family unit. Likewise, if the family is responsible for certain aspects of our cultural identity development such as initial understanding of gender and gender roles, it may also be the primary setting for other forms of cultural transmission as well. Therefore, it may be beneficial to research how families may use cooking to communicate additional information about other parts of our cultural identity.

Values. Botanaki & Mattas (2010) found that different values lie behind preferences for convenience food and home-cooked food. This study was based on Schwartz theory of motivational types of values. Convenience food service marks the desire for adventure, novelty, non-conformity, achievement, and power but home-cooked food orientation values conservation, security, tradition, and harmony and stability in relationships. Therefore, as proposed in this article, cooking or lack thereof is influenced by our given system of values. However, the question remains: can the opposite be true? Can the amount of cooking sculpt our values?

Religious significance. Arnfred (2007) discusses how food is often considered holy in many spiritual traditions. Only those ordained may prepare and serve the food. As a result, many important ceremonies and events cannot be held without some form of food and cooking process. For example, in the Christian traditions, Christians participate in communion, a regular ceremony of consuming bread and wine used as symbols of remembrance for Jesus Christ’s death on the cross; in some Christian traditions, it is believed that the bread and wine are transformed into his literal body and blood. Thus, by imbibing the communion elements, one is connecting with Christ and taking in all it means to follow Him.

Role of cooking in the immigration process. Wright-St.Clair, Hocking, Bunrayong, Vittayakorn, & Rattakorn (2005), Chakrabarti (2010), Lindén & Nyberg (2009), Bowen & Devine (2010) discuss food as a fundamental element of cultural assertion and continuity for those who have migrated from one country to another. Chakrabarti (2010) note the importance of local social networks for pregnant Bengali immigrant women in New York City. "Home cooked food served as a way to express concern and care; such exchanges also helped to recreate an environment where a remembered home was relived through familiar and known taste. Lindén & Nyberg (2009) states, "Food consumption can be recognized as a marker of class and status in the same way as consumption of leisure activities and clothing. When language fails in communication, visible signs become more important." While family relationships and social ties can be broken during the migration process, this may also bring the family together. This level of access and desire to maintain connection with food customs is reflected in and strengthened by both the type of food cooked and with whom family members cook (Bowen and Devine, 2010). Food recipes, especially those from traditional holidays, are a time capsule for stories about generations past and creates a sense of belonging and connection to those who have created the same thing before. "In the process of preparing family favourites or trying exciting new foods at Christmas, older New Zealand women construct self and family identities." (p. 332) (Wright-St.Clair, Hocking, Bunrayong, Vittayakorn, & Rattakorn, 2005). While these studies also begin delving into some aspects of cooking and food consumption, more exploration is needed about how exactly the process of cooking directly changes immigrant family dynamics, acculturation process, and cultural transmission. Perhaps through further knowledge of the impact of cooking, cooking with patients may help clinicians to learn and respect the patient's culture and know how to promote client-centered interventions (Odwara, 2005).

Cooking as way to provoke memories of our identity and relationships

Four separate studies of clients with dementia by Berenbaum (1995), Brijnath (2011), Huang, Li, Yang, & Chen (2009), Bier et al. (2011), and Genoe et al. (2011) highlight the significance of using cooking as a method to support continual cognitive and personal growth through memory and reflection within the context of cooking. They argue that cooking and eating offer a way to retain identity, stay connected, improve functioning, stay in the present through sensory stimulation, show and receive love, and ultimately delay the degenerative effects of dementia. As discussed above, O'Connell (2010) and Chen (2010) note how the body remembers through sensory experiences. The act of cooking and eating are contained with the movements, smells, sights, and textures and will reawaken when repeated once again. Chen (2010) notes how the personal and impressionable quality of the body is especially evident in studies on traumatic experiences and memory. This ability to recall fond memories associated with food indicates that food processes are significant in a person's upbringing and development. While these three empirical studies focus on a narrow population, I believe that there is potential to incorporate these findings in a more generalized manner as I hope to explore through this study.

Theoretical Framework

The concepts for this study are based the ideas of Donald Winnicott and Object Relations theory. He discussed the importance of a transitional object that helps the child slowly understand and gain independence from his or her caregiver while still remaining connected; it fosters the child's sense of his or her full, authentic, true self. Later, Winnicott writes that this

transitional object is not only a tangible item but can be expanded into experiences. Mitchell & Black (1995) state, "Transitional experience became the protected realm within which the creative self could operate and play; it was the area of experience from which art and culture were generated" (p. 128). Thus, aligned with these theories, cooking can be a type of transitional experience that holds creativity and culture, and can act as a means of connection with one's caregivers. Anna Meigs states,

> Food has a distinctive feature, one that sets it off from the rest of material culture: it is ingested, it is eaten, it goes inside. In a small-scale society, moreover, it is and is understood to be the product of the labor of known individuals, the output of their blood, their sweat, their tears. As output of one person and as input into another, food is a particularly apt vehicle for symbolizing and expressing ideas about the relationship of self and other.

Accordingly, I will use this study to explore the relevance of these ideas to build upon and further understand the effects of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. A clearer understanding of this topic may uncover new, practical and currently underutilized methods to practice clinical social work by potentially using cooking a therapeutic intervention to appropriately address family and cultural identity needs. This is aligned with the larger movement of the field of practice toward a more holistic and culturally responsive approach to therapy in addition to talk therapy. While there are some areas of enlightenment regarding the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development, this topic area is relatively young and understudied. The findings from this research report will provide further insight and point the direction for future areas of inquiry in order to expound upon this topic and its practical application to social work.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. The research questions to be explored in this study are: How does cooking affect family relationships and an individual's perception of these relationships? How does cooking affect the development of cultural identity?

Sample

The research sample consists of 275 participants. The study focuses on a population with the following inclusion criteria:

1) 18 and over
2) Able to read and write in English
3) Able to navigate an online survey
4) Have access to a computer, the Internet, and email.

The study will aim to survey at least 10 participants from five race groups in order to include representation from a diverse group and in hopes of exploring racially and culturally linked patterns. The study employs a non-probability snowball sampling to recruit participants. The researcher will first email a series of contacts including social work classmates, internship colleagues, and personal and community contacts to help recruit individuals who meet the survey criteria to participate and forward the survey to others. Because this is exploratory research, the

study hopes to enlist a varied population and wants to be open as possible to data from the larger population. The hope is to find more specific areas of study including the need to study certain population demographics.

Data Collection

Before beginning the recruitment and data collection process, a human subjects review application including the survey instrument and consent (Appendix A) for this study will be reviewed and approved by the Smith School for Social Work's Human Subjects Review Committee.

When the study is approved, a recruitment letter (Appendix B) will be emailed to initial contacts to recruit eligible participants. Prior to beginning the online survey questionnaire, interested participants will be asked to carefully read through and print a copy of the Informed Consent letter and List of Resources. This letter will outline participation and confidentiality in the survey, where to find services if needed, and contact information for further inquiry. Participants must check an "I agree" box indicating that they have read and understand the information before proceeding to the survey questions.

Following consent, the participant will answer a series of questions regarding participant's demographic information, cultural identity development, family relationships, and thoughts about how their life may have been influenced by cooking. The survey is comprised of 30 questions including 6 open-ended short answer questions. The structure of the survey will begin with 11 demographic focused questions. This includes questions such as self-identified race and ethnicity, immigration generation, adoption status, area of upbringing, age, gender, religion, and socioeconomic status. The latter part of this series of questions will be more

oriented toward the participant's relationship with their family and racial/ethnic/cultural identity. These questions will ask the participants to scale the importance, the level of connection, and general attitude toward their family and culture. After, the survey will lead into 19 questions directly related to the area of study that utilizes a mix of Likert Scales, check all that apply questions, and comment boxes. This series of questions will regard the participant's personal relationship with cooking such as amount of time spent cooking individually, amount of time spent cooking with family, how often the participant cooked with family during childhood, how much the participant enjoys or does not enjoy cooking, feelings and thoughts associated with cooking and eating a home-cooked meal. The estimated time frame of participation is approximately 30 minutes. Because this is an anonymous email survey, there will be no monetary cost to distribute the survey and no financial incentive to participate.

The data will be collected over the period of one month and the survey answers will be automatically uploaded to an online spreadsheet through Google Surveys. No emails, Internet addresses, or computer information will be collected through this survey program in order to protect participants' anonymity. While the survey does not elicit identifying information, it does not preclude participants from entering identifying information in the comment boxes on their own. Thus, the researcher will review all data with special attention to short answer questions. Any identifying information will be removed before saving a more permanent copy of the spreadsheet for data analysis. It is only after this process of meticulously reviewing data to ensure anonymity that the spreadsheet will be shared with the research advisor and Smith statistician.

Data Analysis

The majority of the quantitative data will be analyzed primarily using descriptive statistics using the data from the Google spreadsheet and a summary from the Google Survey program. However, after the data is collected and reviewed by the researcher, the quantitative data used for correlation analysis will be forwarded to a statistician at Smith College for further analysis. The Smith statistician will run a Spearman Rho correlations to look at the relationship between immigration generation (both maternal and paternal side) and:

a. Feeling connected to family through cooking
b. Feeling connected to culture through cooking
c. Importance of culture
d. Attitude toward culture.

Similarly, the Smith statistician will run a Spearman Rho correlation to check the relationship between:

a. Attitude toward culture and frequency of meals cooked native to culture
b. Attitude toward family and frequency of meals cooked with parents during childhood
c. Time spent cooking with parents and feeling connected to family through cooking.

Following this, the researcher will analyze qualitative data from participant's short answers to code for common themes. This interpretative analysis will be done through multiple readings and demarcating segments in each response with a code related to major themes. After, the number of each code will be tallied in order to note the prevalence of each theme. The researcher will code all participant responses to each question separately and focus primarily on the information gathered in the questions concerning the level of connection to family through cooking and level of connection to culture through cooking.

The collected qualitative and quantitative data will be presented in the next chapter. This will include a breakdown of quantitative responses, the findings from the correlations statistical analysis, and a summary of coded themes in qualitative answers.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this research study is to discover the effects of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. The research questions answered by this study are: How does cooking affect family relationships and an individual's perception of these relationships? How does cooking affect the development of cultural identity? Because there is a lack of literature focused on this specific aspect of everyday life, the exploratory research hopes to capture a basic understanding of the sociocultural and psychological role of cooking in a person's life as well as illuminate further areas of study (i.e. specific demographics to study or potential clinical interventions). This chapter contains a summary of the major quantitative and qualitative findings from the study.

The survey yielded 275 participants who fit the survey criteria. I will present the quantitative findings first, followed by the qualitative findings. Within this chapter, if specific data yielded questions where a certain number of participants did not answer, I will present two percentages. The first will represent the percentage of frequency of given responses while the second will represent the percentage of frequency of all participants. When all participants responded to a question, only one percentage is given.

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Demographics

Participants were asked a range of self-identified demographic questions including race, ethnicity, age, gender, childhood socioeconomic status, current socioeconomic status, and religion/spiritual practice. Within these questions, participants were allowed to check more than one race category. If participant noted more than one answer, each was coded separately and counted toward frequency. Other demographics, such as ethnicity, religious/spiritual background, cultural background of parents and area where they were raised were also asked. However, these were not quantified because the question yielded too large of a variance of responses. For each of the tables in the finding sections, N=275. If a question was left blank by one or more participants, two percentages were included in the findings. The first was calculated according to number of participants who answered that question and the second was calculated according to the overall number of survey participants of 275. The aim of the study was to obtain at least 10 participants from each racial category in order to reach a diverse demographic and include multiple perspectives. This goal was achieved in every race group with the exception of Native American participants. The following tables are a breakdown of the main demographics of participants.

Table 1
Demographics of Sample Population

Demographic	Frequency	Percentage of Answered	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Race			
Asian/Pacific Islander	77	28.00	28.00
Black	15	5.45	5.45
Latino/a	14	5.09	5.09
Native American	5	1.82	1.82
White	172	62.55	62.55
Other	11	4.00	4.00
Age			
18-19	0	0.00	0.00
20-29	138	53.08	50.18
30-39	60	23.08	21.82
40-49	23	8.85	8.36
50-59	22	8.46	8.00
60-69	13	5.00	4.73
70-79	3	1.15	1.09
80+	1	0.38	0.36
Not Answered	15	-	5.45
Gender			
Female	215	78.18	78.18
Male	57	20.73	20.73
Other	3	1.09	1.09
Not Answered	0	-	0.00
Childhood socioeconomic status			
Low SES	60	21.82	21.82
Middle SES	164	59.64	59.64
High SES	51	18.55	18.55
Not Answered	0	-	0.00
Current socioeconomic status			
Low SES	46	16.85	16.73
Middle SES	183	67.03	66.55
High SES	44	16.12	16.00
Not Answered	2	-	0.73

Table 2
Immigration Generation*

Maternal			
1st Generation	55	20.15	20.00
2nd Generation	46	16.85	16.73
3rd Generation	50	18.32	18.18
4th Generation or more	122	44.69	44.36
Not Answered	2	-	0.73
Paternal			
1st Generation	53	19.63	19.27
2nd Generation	51	18.89	18.55
3rd Generation	50	18.52	18.18
4th Generation or more	116	42.96	42.18
Not Answered	5	-	1.82

** Note: 1st generation means participant was first to immigrate. 2nd generation means participant's mother or father was the first to immigrate and participant is the second generation from their family to live in the United States.*

The demographic data shows that specific demographics are strongly represented in this data. The majority of participants identify as white, followed by a large portion of participants who identify as Asian/Pacific Islander. Also, the largest percentage of the sample population is in the 20-29 year old group, followed by 30-39 year old group. Additionally, there is almost four times the number of female participants than male participants in the sample population. Lastly, the aggregate of participants who are the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd generation from their family to live in the United States are only approximately 15-20% of the sample populations on both the maternal and paternal side while the majority of participants are the 4th generation or more from their family to live in the United States.

Level of Importance and Attitude toward Race, Ethnicity, Culture and Family

Participants were asked to measure the level of importance of their race, ethnicity, culture, and family to their identity. This was measured on a Likert Scale (very important,

important, moderately important, unimportant, very unimportant). Subsequently, participants were asked to measure their attitude toward the same 4 categories. This was also measured on a Likert Scale (very proud, proud, neutral, ashamed, very ashamed). The following charts are a summary of these measurements.

Figure 1
Level of Importance of Race, Ethnicity, Culture, and Family to Identity

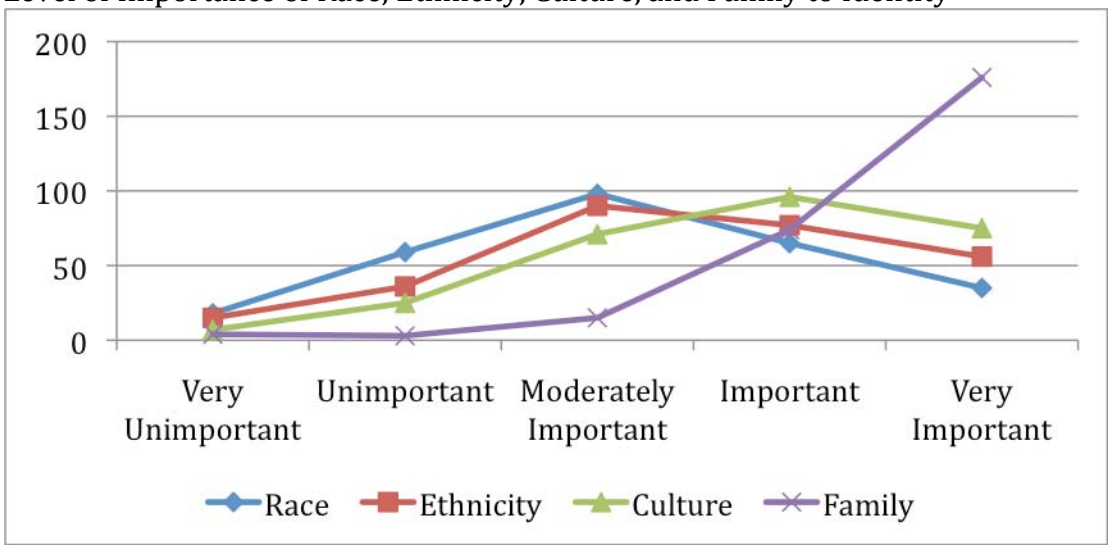
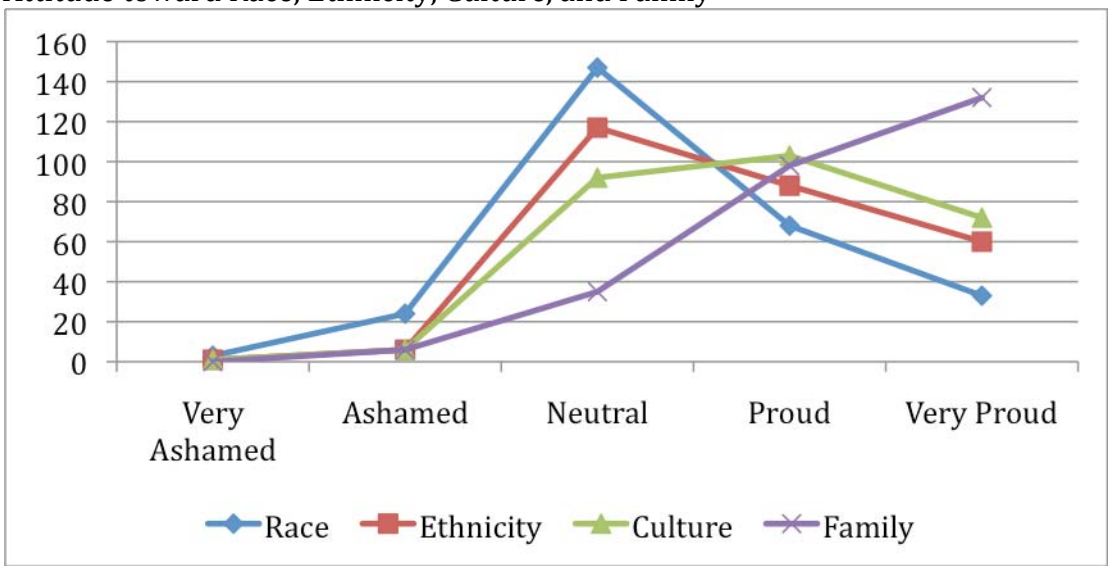


Figure 2
Attitude toward Race, Ethnicity, Culture, and Family



These findings show a bell curve for level of importance and attitude toward race, ethnicity, and culture. The steepest curve and most frequently neutral answers are in regard to race, followed by ethnicity, then culture. However, there is a significant increase in level of importance and pride of family. This shows that participants are considerably oriented toward and have the strongest feelings of pride about their family. This data will be returned to later in the findings chapter to explore potential correlations.

Reported Answers Regarding Regularity of Cooking

The data shows that 29.56% (29.45%) of participants spend an average of 0-29 minutes per day cooking, 44.16% (44.0%) of participants spend an average of 30-59 minutes per day cooking, and 23.72% (23.64%) of participants spend an average of 1-2 hours per day cooking. The remaining less than 3% did not answer the question or spent an average of more than 2 hours per day cooking.

The following two tables include the regularity of cooking meals native to culture and regularity of cooking with parents during childhood. The data from both of these tables will be used in the correlations study.

Table 3
Regularity of Cooking Meals Native to Culture

Value	Frequency	Percentage of Answered	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Always	8	2.92	2.91
Frequently	73	26.64	26.55
Occasionally	115	41.97	41.82
Rarely	63	22.99	22.91
Never	15	5.47	5.45
Not Answered	1	-	0.36

Table 4
Regularity of Cooking with Parents during Childhood

Value	Frequency	Percentage of Answered	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Always	11	4.04	4.00
Frequently	79	29.04	28.73
Occasionally	90	33.09	32.73
Rarely	76	27.94	27.64
Never	16	5.88	5.82
Not Answered	3	-	1.09

Reported Answers Regarding Function of Cooking

The next series of data summarizes participant's responses regarding the function of cooking in their lives. When participants were asked to measure their level of enjoyment of cooking, 228 participants or 83.52% (82.91%) report a positive level, 29 participants or 10.62% (10.55%) report a neutral level, and 16 participants or 5.86% (5.82%) report a negative level. When asked to rate their level of enjoyment of cooking specifically native to participant's culture, 171 participants or 63.1% (62.18%) report a positive level, 86 participants or 31.73% (31.27%) report a neutral level, and 14 participants or 5.17% (5.09%) report a negative level. This shows that participants report a more neutral stance when thinking about cooking food native to their culture. However, the majority of participants report a positive level of enjoyment for both cooking in general and cooking native to their culture.

The following four tables report on the participant's feelings associated with cooking and eating meals in general and ones native to their culture. Participants were provided a list of feelings and were asked to check all that apply. Thus, percentages reflect the percentage of all participants (N=275) who checked the box, not the percentage of those who answered the question.

Table 5
Feelings when Cooking a Meal

Feelings	Frequency	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Stressed	72	26.18
Comforted	174	63.27
Nostalgic	76	27.64
Disgusted	2	0.73
Festive	106	38.55
Satisfied	202	73.45
Other	82	29.82
Total number of checked boxes	714	-

Table 6
Feelings when Cooking a Meal Native to Culture

Feelings	Frequency	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Stressed	27	9.82
Comforted	132	48.00
Nostalgic	139	50.55
Disgusted	1	0.36
Festive	98	35.64
Satisfied	127	46.18
Other	62	22.55
Total number of checked boxes	586	-

The above tables show that the strongest feelings associated with cooking a meal in general are comfort and satisfaction, followed by stress, nostalgia, festiveness, and other feelings. There were minimal feelings of disgust. In contrast, when asked about cooking meals native to culture, participants had less checked boxes or feelings associated. While still the dominant feelings, there was a decrease in number of participants who marked feelings of comfort and satisfaction. Also, there was a significant decrease in number of participants who marked feelings of stress. Conversely, there was significant increase in the number of participants who noted feelings of nostalgia.

Table 7
Feelings when Eating a Home-cooked Meal

Feelings	Frequency	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Stressed	3	1.09
Comforted	227	82.55
Nostalgic	57	20.73
Disgusted	2	0.73
Festive	27	9.82
Satisfied	216	78.55
Other	37	13.45
Total number of checked boxes	569	-

Table 8
Feelings when Eating a Home-Cooked Meal Native to Culture

Feelings	Frequency	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Stressed	4	1.45
Comforted	180	65.45
Nostalgic	137	49.82
Disgusted	5	1.82
Festive	72	26.18
Satisfied	170	61.82
Other	34	12.36
Total number of checked boxes	602	-

Similar to the data reporting feelings associated with cooking, the two most dominant feelings associated with eating home-cooked meals in general and native to their culture were comfort and satisfaction. Likewise, there was a significant increase in feelings of nostalgia when eating a home-cooked meal native to culture from eating a home-cooked meal in general. In this set of data, there was also an increase in feelings of festiveness. While there is some variance in numbers, and this question did not measure intensity of each feeling, the data implies that participants experience similar feelings on the providing, cooking end as well as on the receiving, eating end. The qualitative data discussed later in

this chapter will expound upon the causes and circumstances behind these reported feelings in connection to family relationships and cultural identity development.

The following table chronicles the function of cooking in participants' lives. Like the above questions, participants were provided with a list of options and asked to check all that apply.

Table 9
Purpose of Cooking

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Chore	123	44.73
Hobby	148	53.82
Gift	99	36.00
Way to Celebrate	193	70.18
Method of Showing Care	212	77.09
Way to Feed Myself and Others	248	90.18
Hassle	59	21.45
Way to Relax	129	46.91
Expression of Creativity	175	63.64
Way to bring People Together	216	78.55
Waste of Time	6	2.18
Other	28	10.18

The findings show that participants report that the top three reasons for cooking are to feed self and others, bring people together, and show care. This implies that it is a practical act that connects people. Only 6 participants marked that cooking is a waste of time; this supports the idea that for most participants, it is a purposeful part of their lives.

The last two tables of the descriptive, quantitative data show the level of connection to family and culture through cooking.

Table 10
Level of Connection to Family through Cooking

Value	Frequency	Percentage of Answered	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Strongly Agree*	87	31.75	31.64
Agree	112	40.88	40.73
Neutral	52	18.98	18.91
Disagree	19	6.93	6.91
Strongly Disagree	4	1.46	1.45
Not Answered	1		0.36

**Note: Agree means that the participant feels connected to family through cooking while disagree means that the participant doe not feel connected to family through cooking*

Table 11
Level of Connection to Culture through Cooking

Value	Frequency	Percentage of Answered	Percentage of Total Sample Population (N=275)
Strongly Agree*	46	16.79	16.73
Agree	85	31.02	30.91
Neutral	101	36.86	36.73
Disagree	32	11.68	11.64
Strongly Disagree	10	3.65	3.64
Not Answered	1		0.36

**Note: Agree means that the participant feels connected to culture through cooking while disagree means that the participant doe not feel connected to culture through cooking*

72.63% (72.37%) of participants report feeling connected to family through cooking, 18.98% (18.91%) of participants report feeling neutral, and 8.39% (8.36%) report not feeling connected to family through cooking. These numbers imply that the majority of participants believe that cooking helps them to feel connected to their family. For the second question, 47.81% (47.64%) of participants report feeling connected to culture through cooking, 36.86% (36.73%) of participants report feeling neutral, and 15.33% (15.28%) of participants report not feeling connected to culture through cooking. While the largest proportion of participants believe that cooking increases connection to culture, there was also a large portion who remain neutral around the impact of cooking. When the

data from these two questions are compared, it shows that more people feel connected to their families than culture through cooking, and more people express neutrality around the feeling of connection to culture than to family.

Correlations

The Smith statistician, Marjorie Postal, ran a series of Spearman Correlations to look at whether there were relationships between specific factors. Below are the non-parametric correlation data tables. The first compares the relationship between immigration generation (for both mother and father separately) and the following four factors.

Table 12
Immigration Generation Correlations

			Immigration Generation Mother	Immigration Generation Father
Spearman's rho	Immigration Generation (Maternal)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.733**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	273	269
	Immigration Generation (Paternal)	Correlation Coefficient	.733**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	269	270
	Connection to Family through Cooking	Correlation Coefficient	-.125*	-.189**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	.002
		N	272	269
	Connection to Culture through Cooking	Correlation Coefficient	.195**	.120*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.049
		N	272	269
	Level of Importance of Culture to Identity	Correlation Coefficient	.183**	.218**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000
		N	272	269
	Attitude toward Culture	Correlation Coefficient	.114	.136*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.060	.025
		N	272	269

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The data shows that there is a significant, weak negative correlation between mother's immigration generation and connection to family through cooking (rho=-.125, p=.039, two tailed) as well as a significant, weak negative correlation between father's immigration generation and connection to family through cooking (rho=-.189, p=.002, two tailed). This suggests that the more generations of the participant's family that have lived

in the United States, the more participants felt connected to family through cooking. However, there is a significant, weak positive correlation between mother's immigration generation and connection to culture through cooking (rho=-.195, p=.001, two tailed) and a significant, weak positive correlation between father's immigration generation and connection to culture through cooking (rho=-.120, p=.049, two tailed). This suggests that the more generations of the participant's family that have lived in the United States, the less participants felt connection to culture through cooking. Thus, participants with less generations of their family that have lived in the United States feel a stronger connection to culture through cooking while participants with more generations of their family that have lived in the United States feel a stronger connection to family through cooking.

Additionally, there is significant, weak positive correlation between mother's immigration generation and level of importance of culture to identity (rho=.183, p=.000, two tailed) as well as between father's immigration generation and level of importance of culture to identity (rho=.218, p=.000, two tailed). This implies that the more generations of a participant's family that have lived in the United States, the less important culture is to a participant's identity. In analyzing immigration generation and attitude toward culture, the statistician found that there is no correlation for mother's immigration generation and a significant, weak positive correlation for father's immigration generation (rho=.136, p=.025, two tailed). This implies that the more generations of a participant's paternal family that have lived in the United States, the less proud participants are of their culture.

Table 13
Attitude toward Culture and Frequency of Cooking Meals Native to Culture Correlation

			Attitude toward Culture	Frequency of Meals Cooked Native to Culture
Spearman's rho	Attitude toward Culture	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.229**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	274	273
	Frequency of Meals Cooked Native to Culture	Correlation Coefficient	.229**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	273	274

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is a significant, weak positive correlation between attitude toward culture and frequency of meals cooked native to culture (rho=.229, p=.000, two tailed). This indicates that as attitude toward culture becomes more positive, participants prepare meals native to their culture more often and conversely, the more participants prepare meals native to their culture, the more positive their attitude toward culture.

Table 14
Attitude toward Family and Frequency of Meals Cooked with Parents during Childhood Correlation

			Attitude toward Family	Frequency of Meals Cooked with Parents during Childhood
Spearman's rho	Attitude toward Family	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.240**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	271	268
	Frequency of Meals Cooked with Parents during Childhood	Correlation Coefficient	.240**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	268	272

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is a significant, weak positive correlation between attitude toward family and frequency of meals cooked with parents during childhood (rho=.240, p=.000, two tailed). This indicates that as attitude toward family becomes more positive, participants remember preparing meals with their parents during childhood more often and conversely, participants who prepared meals more often with their parents during childhood, the more positive their attitude toward family.

Table 15
Level of Connection to Family through Cooking and Frequency of Cooking Meals with Parents during Childhood Correlation

			Connection to Family through Cooking	Frequency of Cooking Meals with Parents during Childhood
Spearman's rho	Connection to Family through Cooking	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.310**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
		N	274	271
	Frequency of Cooking Meals with Parents during Childhood	Correlation Coefficient	.310**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
		N	271	272

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In this last correlation, there is a significant, weak positive correlation between feeling connected to family through cooking and the frequency of cooking meals with parents during childhood (rho=.310, p=.000, two tailed). This indicates that the more participants cooked meals with their parents during childhood, the more they felt connected to family through cooking.

QUALITATIVE DATA

This qualitative data expands and elucidates on the quantitative finding with personal, in depth reports on participant's experience and relationship with cooking. The short answer responses were coded and organized into common themes. First, I will

provide a table with a summary of the findings. This will be followed by brief explanations with quoted examples for each of the major themes.

The Impact of Cooking on Family Relationships

The written responses are verification that cooking has some effect on family relationships as affirmed by 83.2% (75.64%) of all participants who answered this short answer question. Of the remaining participants, 12.8% (11.64%) believed that cooking did not affect their relationships, and 4.0% (3.64%) were neutral, unsure, or unclear in their response. Of those who provided an explanation of how cooking has affected their family relationships, 83.72% (65.45%) discussed positive effects, 12.56% (9.82%) of participants discussed negative effect, while 10.23% (8.0%) were neutral or did not assign a positive or negative value to the effect of cooking on family relationships. If participants listed both positive and negative effects, they were included in both categories.

This next section highlights major themes from the 275 responses and provides verbatim examples of how participants have experienced the impact of cooking on family relationships.

Cooking as a reflection of the quality of relationships and family dynamics. Participants noted that the type of and quality of food mirrored the way one experienced their family relationships. As family dynamics changed, the quality of ingredients and dishes or regularity of cooking would follow. In this way, cooking tracks the health and existence of family relationships.

> I do think I am able to see the quality of my family relationships within the food that is provided. My mother created 'shit in a pan'-which usually consists of all the left overs or random pieces that wouldn't normally go together- in a pot and make it for dinner. This reflects the relationship and quality of care she was providing for us.

> She was trying to make ends meet in our home both time-wise and financially therefore, everyone including our relationships were stress [sic]. Therefore, the food quality was lacking.
>
> Not since my mom passed away.
> She used to have special dishes that she made.
> Now no one makes them.
> My siblings and I are estranged.

Cooking as an opportunity to bring people together and connect. 129 participants or 63.55% of participants who provided an explanation discussed cooking as a way to connect with other family members. Cooking and the kitchen are explained as a point of gathering; they are a place to spend quality time together.

> I think it brings us closer together. I grew up with 4 siblings and not all of us participated equally in the cooking because one or two had less interest in cooking. Those of us who participated more often definitely have warmer and tight-knit feelings about our family.
>
> The kitchen and dining room table are where we spend the majority of our time together. It's also something that slows us down and makes sure that we connect every day.
>
> I think my kids have given us very few difficulties as teenagers because we cook and eat together as a family. We try to make food they really enjoy on a daily basis (which lures them to the table). My husband and I grocery shop together (for many years it was our "together time") and get along well together in the kitchen. I think this is a comfort to the kids. Our dinner table is a low-stress time--we set the standard early that the grown-ups talk at dinner, but the kids are welcome to join in--we don't quiz the kids or discipline them then. Our family table is very much the center of our home.

Cooking as tangible care, comfort. 31 participants or 15.27% of participant explanations described cooking primarily as a form of care and comfort. This is further supported by data on previous question stating, “Is cooking a way you show and receive care? Please Explain” where 247 or 91.48% of participants who answered affirmed that cooking was a method of giving and receiving care.

> None other than to make them stronger and for us to stay connected. As it pertains to my expended family, my gifts of food reminds them (and me) they are not forgotten and that I care/love them no matter how long it is between the times I see them as well as the physical distance between us.
>
> Cooking supports family relationships, whether cooking for others, being fed by others' cooking, or cooking together. It's nurturing at it's most fundamental. It can also be very fun.
>
> It has brought us together in tough times for sure. It's something that never goes away even through constant change. I also partnered with a chef in my romantic life, which has kept me even more tightly connected to the way that cooking=comfort, necessity, creativity, and love in many ways.

Cooking as a means of acceptance and appreciation for the giver. At times, participants described cooking as an expression of self or a form of care as discussed above; 4 participants noted the importance of family members receiving this representation of self or gift of care in order to feel accepted and appreciated.

> When my parents separated my mom taught me how to cook her chicken and I made some for the house for my dad and two siblings. Because my dad thought my mom had cooked it, he threw it out. This memory always hurts my heart. It has become an *[sic]* microcosm of the rejection I have experienced from him throughout my adult life.
>
> Yes, my husband is always happy when I cook food for him. He likes to find the new recipe and cook some new food for me as well. Cooking is a way to show love. He is very proud that I like his food. So am I.

Cooking as a topic of conversation and alternative mode of communication. Another recurring theme described cooking as part of family conversation content. It was described as an easy starting point to share and provided "something to talk about." It was also described a way to non-verbally communicate when there were language barriers or difficulty with verbal expression. 23 participants or 11.33% of participants who answered noted this role of cooking in their family relationships.

> Yes. Sharing recipes is important in my family. Its *[sic]* also been a means to talk with my mother when our relationship is strained. Our family talks about food a lot.

> Especially when different family members are learning to cook something particular. (bread, jam, preserving) or learning a new recipe that has cultural significance. Or to create a new recipe. Food is very much a weaving together of our identity as a family.
>
> Cooking is one of the only ways I can bond with my grandmother because she does not speak English very well. Her main way to communicate that she cares about us is to prepare lots of good food. Now that she is getting older, it is our way to show that we care about her to ask her about her recipes and cooking techniques, and to try and prepare some food for her or at least with her.
>
> Yes. Think "like water for chocolate". I pour it all in there and it comes out like magic. Stress turns out as bad meals with too little seasoning or a forgotten ingredient. Joy can be the riot of too many desserts or a beautiful summer fruit salad. So cooking is expressive its *[sic]* a way to talk to children and share even when you cannot. We are closer for it.

Cooking as a marker of child development and defining point of child-caregiver roles. Participants used cooking to instill independence and judge growth for themselves and for their children. It was also a point where they respected their parents and established closeness through a "teacher-student relationship."

> My girls and I are closer than ever. I feel they can measure their growth and maturity by what I allow them to do. Even the clean up has a process. There was a time when they were not allowed to fill up the dishwasher. Now they are both allowed to both fill up and empty the dishwasher except for the glass items. They are both allowed to rinse off any dish including glass items. They are allowed to cut some vegetables but not meat yet. They are allowed to flip a pancake and stir some cooking foods. We are close and I feel that cooking gives me a way to capture their attention and makes me feel valuable and needed. I like having some neutral thing that I am in charge of that others want from me. It makes me feel that the girls need to love me in order to learn a skill from me that they want to.
>
> On rare occasions, cooking with my siblings has improved our relationships. Cooking has also helped me look up to my parents.
>
> It gave my grandmother a reason to come over, and it was a huge part of how she showed love and remained present in our lives. Cooking is a way I show my dad that I remember what he taught me.

Cooking as a part of gender identity role definition in the family. In some cases, participants described cooking as an expectation or duty of women in the family.

> My mom has been the main cook in my family. It affected relationships by creating strong, gendered roles in my house growing up. My mom also worked full time so housework was her "second shift."
>
> Yes, my parents are pretty relieved that I can cook so there is hope I will be married off. Ok, but in all seriousness, I think they are even quite impressed sometimes with the breadth of my cooking knowledge & at least are comforted by the fact that I will not starve to death or eat unhealthily while I live away from them. As for my boyfriend, he is really happy that I can cook properly so that he doesn't have to go out and eat junk everyday. Not everyone gets to bring a home-cooked meal to work for lunch. I'm sure his parents are happy he is eating properly as well.

Cooking as a stress point in relationships. For 6 participants, cooking became a particularly poignant site of dissent for those with a specific dietary restrictions and food choice preferences that differed from their upbringing or other members of their family. The last example below states that cooking "ranks members" but is unclear if this is through skill, food choices, or some other reason related to cooking.

> It has strengthened the bond between my mother and I and helped her realize she needs to eat a more nutritious diet; it has polarized the dinner table because my father, who insists on eating a diet heavy with meat, will get angry when my mother and I collaborate on a vegetarian dish and invest more effort in something that is primarily for me rather than him.
>
> There is a distinct split in the family because my husband's family doesn't recognize and value REAL food, while we don't value conventional food that they eat. Holidays are awkward and often defensive on their part while strained on our part (I can't eat half of what they serve) and I resent their cavalier attitude when feeding my child CRAP without my permission.

Cooking as a holder of memory, tradition, and identity. 34 participants described cooking as a way to keep memory and tradition alive. Cooking and these memories and traditions became a way to define their personal and family identity.

> Yes. Growing up my mom and dad alternated cooking dinner, and we'd all eat together. Meals are a great way to spend time together, and create memories (the olfactory and gustatory elements make the memories stronger and sweeter!). Now we reminisce about old-time staples, and reflect on how our diets and cooking styles have shifted as a family over the decades. We love to reminisce, and of course we still east *[sic]* every day, so the story just keeps layering. Thanksgiving has the

> strongest, or most ingrained cooking traditions, which hold delightful stories too. All of these makes us laugh, smile, tease, and mouths water, which all make us closer.
>
> Yes. I feel a lot closer to my father's side because of all the recipes they have passed down through the family, as well as other family/cultural things. My mother's side of the family decided to abandon and destroy all traits of their culture, recipes included, when they came to the U.S. and all their. I guess I just feel sort of distant from the culture I came from because of that, and therefor *[sic]* distant from them.
>
> Some of the French Canadian foods that my grandparents prepared and my father prepares often help me to feel a sense of cultural belonging. Especially since moving away from my home and my family, when I cook these foods I feel proud of where my family is from.

The Impact of Cooking on Cultural Identity Development

The findings from this question affirm that cooking has some affect on cultural identity development. 148 participants or 58.73% (53.82%) of those who answered confirmed that cooking has made an impact on their cultural identity development. 70 participants or 27.78% (25.45%) of those who answered did not think that cooking has no effect. 28 participants or 11.11% (10.18%) made statements that were neutral, unsure, or unclear around whether or not cooking made an impact on cultural identity development. Included in this grouping are those who discussed that they have not put much thought into their cultural identity or even question whether they have a cultural identity.

This next section highlights major themes from the 275 responses and provides verbatim examples of how participants have experienced the impact of cooking on cultural identity development

Cooking as a measurement of strength of identification with culture and a way to differentiate themselves from identification with another culture. Parallel to using cooking a reflection of the state of family relationships, participants described cooking as a gauge of acceptance and association with one's culture. Though not asked to blatantly define their

culture, most but not all participants answered this question in reference to their ethnic heritage.

> Absolutely. Most of us don't speak Italian well or at all, and food- & drink-making are our primary cultural identifiers.
>
> Yes. It is an easy and obvious distinguishing trait. As a Black women with locs, I am sometimes indistinguishable from African-Americans and other West Indians. The type of food I prepare and usually eat are a part of what sets me apart.
>
> I feel accomplished when I cook something from scratch. That didn't happen a lot at home. The amount of Chinese food I cook reflects how little Chinese identity I have.

Cooking as a way to bring spark interest and learn about own culture. Participants described cooking as a platform for exploring their identity. Cooking is an easy, non-confrontational method to bring about awareness and understanding of cultural identity. This pertains to both the process within and with others.

> It has provided me with an enjoyable avenue for learning about Vietnamese culture, whether it is the language, agricultural practices, techniques, and overall history.
>
> I don't speak Chinese and so cooking is a large part of my cultural identity. Without knowledge of Chinese foods, I would certainly have a less developed cultural identity. Cooking and food help us understand who we are and negotiate feelings of being a cultural minority without having some of the markers of being from a different culture (e.g. language).
>
> I think cooking has expanded my sense of cultural identity. I did not realize how truly American I am until I married an Italian (new immigrant) and learned how different were *[sic]* are culturally as it relates to how we engage food. I am very much a creature of habit and like to have the same dishes over and over again because of my emotional attachment to the experience while my husband want *[sic]* to make a new dish for every meal. So, we have both had to come to terms with me being distinctly American as well as Southern African American.

Cooking as a manifestation of value systems. Participants asserted that cultural values were incorporated into the style and method of cooking and therefore, a way that values were previously instilled and currently expressed in their lives.

> If anything, cooking has moved me farther away from my cultural identity. I grew up in a working-class small town in northern Ohio. However, ever since I turned 18 I have lived in urban areas and attended top academic institutions, exposing me to cultures and ideas I would have never known otherwise. In addition, my personal and professional emphasis on nutrition and healthfulness is at odds with my original food culture, which relies heavily on fast food, convenience/processed foods, and when home-cooked is often comprised primarily of meat and potatoes. In my opinion, home cooking is not a key cultural element in the rural Midwest. Rather, it is a chore to be accomplished quickly so that household members can return to their nightly activities: Facebooking, TV-watching, etc. For me as an adult, cooking with my boyfriend or with my family is an expression of a number of my beliefs: in pleasure, in healthfulness, and in family.
>
> Absolutely. Cooking the dishes that I once ate as a child has given me perspective into my heritage. I never would have understand the amount of preparation that goes into making sushi if I never made my own sushi rice and sliced my own fish. The level of attention to detail that goes into Japanese cuisine and cooking these dishes has given me a deeper connection with the values characteristic of Japanese culture that are expressed in the food.

Cooking as a description of history. Participants noted that food and its preparation is a long-developed product that is refined and passed down through the generations. These customs provides a sociological account of the lives and culture of people in the past even when participants do not currently live in that same surrounding culture.

> Yes, because African Americans traditionally eat very, very healthy and only in the last 40 - 50 years have succumbed to diet related illnesses. I believe in staying connected to the postive *[sic]* and healthy aspects of my cultural identity.
>
> Yes. As a vegan/vegetarian for the past 20 years I have had to dig into my heritage to understand how we ate before packaged Bologna and canned tuna became staples. I don't eat like my parents, I eat like my great grandparents and my in-laws.
>
> Yes, the older I get, the more I am drawn to the stories behind the recipes or ways of cooking. Most stories speak to the capacity to draw sustenance from even the most basis ingredients - an important capacity when resources are limited. The stories make me humble and more appreciative of what we have.
>
> Yes. Cooking certain foods at Christmas, St. Patrick's Day, the Kentucky Derby, and Mardi Gras helped me understand the cultures that shaped me. Figuring out how to convert Cajun and Southern dishes to lighter, meatless versions paralleled trying to reconcile my whiteness and Southern history of racism with pride in my culture.

Cooking as a container for personal memories and family tradition. Likewise, people discussed that food and its preparation was also specific to holding personal and family culture. Participants used cooking as a way to commemorate these memories and traditions, especially those from their immediate relatives.

> My mom was diagnosed with cancer a year ago, and, among many other obviously upsetting emotions, realizing her mortality made me panic that I hadn't mastered the important Jewish foods yet that I would need to know how to cook when she wasn't around. At the same time, my sister and I experiment with recreating a lot of old-world Ashkenazi food that our mom doesn't cook, and neither of my grandmothers cook either so I guess they were probably lost with our great-grandmothers-- curing our own lox, rendering fat, making sour dill pickles, etc. It feels like an important thing to reconnect with.

> From my mother, Armenian food is very much what we hold onto from the culture. We don't speak the language, but we hold onto the food. From my father, Italian food is much more subtle part of the culture that I learned from my grandparents. It is an expression of the culture and the simplicity of how my grandmother cooks. It is also an important part of how I value fresh grown produce, as I saw my grandfather and heard about my great grandfather gardening and growing food.

Cooking as a way to maintain or establish connection with culture, place, and those with a similar culture. Many participants described cooking as a way to uphold a general connection to their past culture. A large majority of participants only state this fact and do not provide further explanation of how cooking connects them to culture. Of those that provided further details, many discussed it as a way to reconnect to a location or with people who are not in proximity.

> Yes, it really is the most easily accessible and tangible connection to my culture and immediate ancestors

> The more I love the food from my culture the more I feel connected to it - on a very sub-conscious level.

> More than anything else, perhaps, I explore my cultural identity at the stove. I grew up in an African American town, but my family is Jamaican. Both my sister and I connected to the culture of our surroundings by learning to fry chicken, or make greens, which were not dishes my mother and grandmother made. On the other

> hand, I have always treasured the Jamaican side of my identity by cooking rice and peas, and now that I am older, learning more about the food of the island.
>
> Yes, I feel a sense of pride being able to tell people about my cooking methods and the dishes I make that are from my Chinese family. I like cooking them for people and making them try something unexpected, to see if they like it. I take a lot of pride in identifying with my culture via food. It is the easiest way for me to assert my cultural identity as a mixed person because I do not speak Chinese, I pass as white most of the time, and I live far away from my family.

Cooking as a source of pride and appreciation of personal culture. 24 Participants remarked that cultural cooking and food paralleled their pride and appreciation of culture. This was also verified by the previous correlation statistic comparing the attitude toward culture and frequency of meals cooked native to culture. The more participants engaged in cultural cooking, the more positive their attitude toward their culture.

> I feel it is a gift from my Italian ancestors and I share stories of my growing up with my kids who did not know their great grandparents or my mother. Cooking is a way to bridge the generations as well as educate each other about new recipes, new foods to enjoy. I'm proud that Slow Foods movement grew from restaurants and growers in Italy. I'm a slow eater myself....
>
> Very much so, I feel much more proud of my Mexican heritage and identify more as I always have on the outside by my features, I now do inside and have a pride and desire to learn more and practice more the preparation of the food of my culture. It was not always the case, it took many years for me to take pride of who I am. It was *[sic]* learning about my culture's food was a major vehicle to this pride.
>
> Most Korean women tell me not to cook Korean food, and that all of it is difficult to cook. I think that's *[sic]* helped form an abhorrence for the things of my ethnic background.

Cooking as way to shape and define own culture. While the majority of participants described culture in reference to historical culture of specific ethnicities, 24 participants described the importance of cooking in defining and expressing their current identities. This may be through an incorporation, alteration, or a departure from a participant's past culture.

> Some Chinese food does remind me of home, but I grew up eating a lot of American food too so they are both part of my cultural identity. Living in China and eating more Chinese food did develop more of my appreciation for Chinese food and showed me that I am definitely Chinese-American, not just Chinese.
>
> Yes, I think food is one of the top demarcations of culture. When I see culture in this survey I'm not connecting with my ethnicity but rather my current culture: American, health-conscious, whole-foods, vegan/gluten-free/power-foods influenced, modern attempts to reengineer traditional cuisine, etc. in this way, I feel like we say/assume a LOT about ourselves and others simply by watching what we/they cook and how. What kind of oil, sweetener, vegetable, meat, if any. Which heating apparatus, if any. These decisions all reflect back to me who I am ("oh, I guess I really AM a hippy...") more than anything else, and are daily reminders of who we are.

Cooking as a way to show and share culture with others. This may be to pass down and continue culture within the family or to reveal and share parts of self to others.

> Yes, I have sought out Jamaican recipes from family members to teach my children who they are.
>
> My relationship with cooking being a Hispanic man was both something dictated by my culture and also something that has been something I have had to reclaim in terms of my cultural identity. For me, at times to this day, I feel no desire to cook and prefer to "wait" for food to be prepared for me. This is the gender dynamic that is common in Latin homes. At other times, when I do start the process of cooking, I gain comfort and satisfaction and a sense of worth when I cook meals that my grandmother and mother once made for me. I feel I can connect and appreciate the loved ones in my life through the act of cooking at times. I like more than anything to share my life experiences and what better way than through food. Literally my loved ones consume me. Apart of dishes I have learned. Experiences I've had. I feel excited to be able to share myself very literally with others.

Cooking as a bridge to other cultures and people. Participants explain that cooking a way that they gain access to and appreciate the culture of others. This may be in spite of reported lack of connection with their own culture through cooking or in general.

> I am white and seven generations Californian. I do not feel a strong cultural identity to either of my parents' ancestral ethnicities, however I have appreciated aspects of other cultures through their food.
>
> I wouldn't classify anything I made with my family as part of my culture unless you count Lean Cuisne *[sic]* meals as a middle class culture. I can say that my friends and

me always had an affinity for ethnic food. I was closer to them than my family. Their parents had an ethnic background and I loved their food.

Yes, it is the most important thing to understand when learning and taking part in a culture when traveling. My personal culture, I'm less interested in with regards to cooking but with exploring other cultures, I love it. I took a cooking class when studying abroad in Italy and find it my favorite thing to do when traveling - learning about cooking/recipes/eating traditions of other cultures.

Further explanations by those who report that cooking has not affected cultural identity development. Below is a mixed compilation of examples from the 70 participants who report no impact and 28 participants who report some ambivalence around the impact. Participants assert that matters of taste preference and time deter them from cooking cultural cuisine. However, this does not change attitude toward or connection with one's culture. Of note, some participants who self-identified as white had difficulty answering this questions because of difficulty in characterizing and negotiating the definition of their culture.

I've had to figure out how to be Jewish largely without cooking because I dislike it and dont' *[sic]* have time for it

In reality, not at all. My father is very proud of his heritage but "typical Irish food" was not commonly prepared in my house and is not prepared by me today due to my dislike of the "meat and white potatoes" mentality.

Not cooking so much as eating.

With regard to culture, this survey didn't address the issue of whether or not you like or even know about your cultural cuisine. I know a bit about Jewish food and Welch *[sic]* cooking, but not much at all and the foods that I've tasted I don't particularly like. So, it's more of a taste thing that kept me from ranking the importance of culture to my cooking in this survey rather than a lack of interest or connection.

No. For me, cooking is simply a fun way to be creative. I don't really have a strong cultural identity, nor do I feel a need to develop one.

Can't really say, I'm about as much "White American" as it gets.

Other Findings

Some of the collected data was beyond the scope of this research study. Thus, it will not be included in the finding chapter of this thesis. Examples of excluded data are short answer responses about strongest memories related to cooking, favorite thing to cook and why, who first taught to cook and why, as well as Likert Scale responses on the regularity of cooking and with whom. Though not included in the analysis of this study, data may be used in future research.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This mixed method study explored the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. Of the 275 survey participants who responded, 72.63% report feeling some level of connection to family through cooking and 47.81% report feeling some level of connection to culture through cooking.

Research about food related topics have increased and incorporated themes beyond household chore division. However, the overall amount of research, especially related to aspects of the cooking process is small. With the exception of a few articles, cooking is not mentioned in the field of social work. Nonetheless, the above findings still corroborate with the existing literature surrounding this topic and add to our knowledge of the wide variety of functions cooking can play in a person's life. Therefore, this study strengthens previous literature's conclusions regarding the importance of cooking for family relationships and cultural identity development; further, it points out that the main research discrepancy involves the lack of literature that considers cooking to be more than a common task. Still, consistent with literature, the findings show that cooking is regarded as an important life skill. For many, cooking is used to measure developmental progress and maintain family roles. Through this, the child is the receiver of imperative life skills and the caregiver is the teacher of these skills. In this way, it maintains the child-caregiver hierarchy. Moreover, cooking plays a large part in gender role definition; the findings

surrounding this topic wholly align with preceding literature -- while home-cooking is still predominantly taken on by women in the family, there has been a slow cultural shift away from this role expectation.

Previous literature notes the importance of food and cooking as a marker of inclusion and exclusion in the family. However, the findings show that cooking can be much more than a boundary, and can also reveal other aspects of family dynamics. Participants discuss how the quality of cooking and food cooked in the home reflects the quality of relationships. For the giver, it is a way of providing care. For the receiver, it is a means of receiving love. To enlarge this concept, the receiver's reception or type of response to the cooking, can also impact the *giver's* feelings of acceptance and appreciation in the relationship. Some participants note that these ideas apply beyond a person's family of origin; cooking can help create places of connection and a sense of unity and belonging amongst chosen family members as well.

Of note in this finding, is using cooking as a topic of conversation. Some participants disclose that while conversation may not always be easy in certain family relationships, cooking seems to be one place of engagement in the relationship. It can be a more comfortable starting point for strained relationships. However, something that remains unmentioned in existing literature is the discussion around how cooking can negatively impact family relationships. As indicated by the findings of this study, cooking and what to cook can be a stressful topic for families. This is particularly true in families where there is a disagreement about food preferences and/or dietary restrictions. In some cases, certain family members have departed from their family's traditional foods and have developed their own traditions around cooking and eating. Social workers may come to understand

this as a symbolic sign of separation and individuation in the life cycle, or potentially an impasse or cutoff in the relationship. However, the correlations findings show that the more participants cooked meals with their parents during childhood, the more positive their attitude toward their family and the more they feel connected to family through cooking.

While previous literature points to cooking practices as a part of culture, this study reveals that our relationships with cooking also speak of our relationship to our identified cultures. The correlations findings also reveal that the more a person cooked meals native to their culture, the more positive their attitude toward their culture. Participants note that even if they do not strongly identify with their culture of origin, they use food and cooking traditions to learn and connect to the culture of others. Thus, it is a bridge to interface personal culture and the culture of others.

Interestingly, participants note that as cooking traditions are traced back to their early formation, one would find how it fits into the context and history of specific groups of people. For example, cooking can tell stories of the availability of certain ingredients or of materials to make cooking tools, the overall financial state of the time period and area, and the weather or environment. The qualitative responses imply that these factors will develop into a set of value systems that are intrinsic to our everyday lives including cooking.

Similar to responses regarding family, participants discuss how the negotiation of inclusion and exclusion and value systems will also be mirrored in their food and cooking. Thus, cooking can be a way to redefine a new culture. This is exceptionally pertinent to the experiences and lives of immigrants and their succeeding generations. According to the

findings, participants with less generations of their family that have lived in the United States, feel a stronger connection to culture through cooking while those who have more generations of their family that have lived in the United States, feel a stronger connection to family through cooking. This addresses and reflects a person's acculturation and immigration process in the United States. Due to assimilation and integration into the dominant surrounding culture over the course of several generations, the site of connection moves from culture of origin to the family unit.

Limitations of the Study

The inclusion criteria included participants older than 18 years who are able to read and write in English, have access to the Internet, and know how to navigate an online survey. These factors inherently limit the sample and amount of information on specific demographics. The ability to read and write English will exclude those who do not use English as their primary language or may not have had access to English reading and writing education in the United States. This will likely include those who have recently immigrated. Similarly, the criteria to have access to the Internet and know how to navigate and online survey instrument, may exclude those who lack exposure, training, and access to a computer and the Internet. This will likely impact older and poorer populations. Consequently, older people who may have immigrated and potentially have stronger tie to their country and culture of origin may be excluded from the survey. Additionally, the criteria may reduce the number of people with low Internet and computer access. This will likely reduce participants who live in rural areas who may have more nuanced opinions and ties with their food and food processes and participants who live in poor, inner city

areas who do not have as much access or resource to cook and must rely on convenience food.

After collecting the data and closing the survey, it is clear that the racial demographics were not representative of the United States. There is a small number of Black, Latino/a, and Native American participants. Moreover, the majority of participants were 4th generation or more immigrants on both mother and father side of the family. Lastly, there were significantly more females than males that participated in the survey. This may impact the results because cooking has a complex, intertwined historical and sociological relationship with gender identity/roles

By nature of snowball sampling, the data is not a random selection. Initial participants forwarded the survey to people in their immediate network; thus, many participants are likely to share similar traits and characteristics. As a result, the sample is not representative of the population being studied. Also, there may be some bias toward the connection of cooking to family and culture because of participant interest and/or knowledge about the topic. Because participants were not compensated, they were more likely to complete the survey if they have a strong opinion or experience about the subject-matter. This may have biased the results toward a stronger impact on family relationships and cultural identity development. Further, because this is based on self-reported data, there is no way to verify information or regulate whether or not a person repeated the survey.

Similarly, my own investment and opinions likely impacted the results of the research. Participants who were interested in supporting the research or me as the researcher may have changed their answers accordingly to underscore or diminish certain

points. I unintentionally may have done the same in a parallel process because data analysis, especially regarding qualitative responses, is largely based on my own interpretation. Thus, while my hope is to remain impartial, emphasized information, coded themes, and pulled conclusions are likely sculpted by my own subjectivity in some manner.

Implication for Clinical Social Work

The values of social work underscore the importance of human relationships. The National Association of Social Workers state "Social workers seek to strengthen relationships among people in a purposeful effort to promote, restore, maintain, and enhance the wellbeing of individuals, families, social groups, organizations, and communities." The findings of this study provide insights that social workers may use to further grasp a client's interactions in family relationships and potentially with other equally significant or chosen family relationships. Understanding a person's use of cooking in their lives and how it functions in their family, will uncover treatment needs and can help shape treatment goals. Questions centered on the role of cooking in their personal and family life can be use as a great alternative assessment tool.

This research study demonstrates that there is potential to use cooking as a clinical intervention both in an individual and family treatment. The findings illustrate that for many participants they felt more connected to family through cooking. Clinicians can use this as a tool to promote bonding over a shared goal and collaboration through the cooking process. 91.48% of answering participants assert that cooking is a way that they show and receive care. Through encouraging family members to cook for one another, mutual care is also promoted and quality of relationships may be improved. Encouraging cooking can

strengthen or restore family connection through this tangible act of inclusion and care. For those who established themselves outside their family of origin, cooking can be used as a location of affirmation of their belonging in their chosen family. This is particularly poignant for social workers upholding the worth of every person; this manifests in a desire for everyone, including those who are ostracized, to be treated with dignity and have the opportunity to connect with supportive, loving people. Thus, cooking may be a potential intervention to foster and fortify positive outlooks about self and strong family or family-like ties.

As the United States is becoming increasingly diverse, it is becoming more essential for social workers to address cultural needs and clients' relationships with their culture or cultures. The findings point to the fact that a significant number of people feel more connected to their culture of origin through cooking. This is more likely true for those who have directly faced the immigration process and experienced literal and symbolic distance or loss of culture. Some participants remark that cooking foods customary to the new surrounding culture helps them to find their place and feel more a sense of belonging. Cooking can be part of helping immigrants stay connected to their culture of origin, help them to adjust to a new culture, and choose and redefine their current cultural identity. Thus, cooking may help participants covertly navigate between their multiple cultural identities and find the place of reconciliation between their culture of upbringing and current cultural context.

Recommendations for Future Research

As a result of the nature of exploratory studies, this research study is part of the beginning research around this topic. More in-depth interviews of participants would help uncover the personal and nuanced experiences of the impacts of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. While initial studies like this are essential for basic understanding of cooking, additional studies will also be indispensable. For this particular area of study, because cooking is a process and its influence is an experiential phenomenon, it can be difficult to fully capture the role of cooking in a person's life without a conversation. Thus, interviews would add dimension and provide clarity on intentioned meanings to the quantitative data collected in this study.

Further, in order to gather the clinical perspective, it may be helpful to interview individual and family therapists who have used cooking as an assessment tool or intervention. This will shed light on methods of execution, importance, and strengths and limitations in the use of cooking in the clinical social work.

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Appendix A
Survey on Google Surveys

Cooking Survey

I am grateful and excited for your interest and participation in this questionnaire! Before you begin the survey, please read through and print a copy of the Informed Consent letter and List of Resources on the following page.

* Required

Eligibility Requirements for Participation
Page 1 of 4

Participants must be
1) Over the age of 18
2) Able to read and write in English

BY CHECKING "I AGREE" BELOW, YOU ARE INDICATING THAT YOU MEET ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION*
☐ I agree

Informed Consent Letter
Page 2 of 4

Dear Participant,

My name is Tammie Chen and I am a graduate student at the Smith College School for Social Work. I am doing research to learn more about how cooking affects a person's family relationships and cultural identity. This study will be used to write a master's thesis and may be used in possible future presentations, publications, or dissertations.

I would like to invite you to join my study by filling out a short online survey. The survey will ask you some questions about you, your family relationships, cultural identity, and the amount and effects of cooking in your own life. The survey will take around 30 minutes to complete. Participants must be 18 years are older and able to read and write in English.

While there is no financial compensation for participation, your survey answers will allow you to share your personal thoughts and stories about the role of cooking in your life. You will be able to explore how cooking, if at all, has impacted and shaped your family relationships and cultural identity. I hope that further understanding of your experiences can help clinicians and educators create personal, holistic, culturally responsive services for individual and family mental health needs. There is minimal risk for participation;

however, there is a list of mental health resources at the end of this letter if you would like support during or after completing the survey

Your anonymity and confidentiality are protected. The survey program does not collect names, email addresses, or any other identifying information. Your answers will be available only to me through the use of password protection. My research advisor will have access to the data only after any identifying information has been removed from the write-in responses. Please do not include any identifying information about you or your family, this way your anonymity and confidentiality can be guaranteed. Finally, all data will be kept secure for a period of three years as set by federal guidelines. After that time, if the data is no longer needed for research purposes, it will be destroyed. If it is needed for research purposes the data will continue to be kept secured for as long as it is needed and when it no longer needed it will be destroyed.

If you choose to participate, you may stop taking the survey at any point by closing the web browser, and you may choose not to answer any or all of the questions by skipping them. Once you have submitted your data online, it will be impossible to withdraw from the study because your data is anonymous and I will be unable to identify your survey responses from the others that have participated in my study.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights or about any aspect of the study, please feel free to contact me or the Chair of the Smith College School for Social Work Human Subjects Review Committee at (413)585-7974.

Thank you for your time and interest in the study.

Sincerely,
Tammie Chen
MSW Candidate, Smith College School for Social Work

Researcher's Contact:
Tammie Chen
XXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXX

BY CHECKING "I AGREE", YOU ARE INDICATING THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ABOVE INFORMATION AND THAT YOU HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, YOUR PARTICIPATION, AND YOUR RIGHTS AND THAT YOU AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY.*
☐ I agree

Mental Health Referral Resources

1. Berkeley Free Clinic – A clinic that offers drop-in or appointment peer counseling, group counseling, and mental health referrals in the Bay Area.
Phone Number: (510) 548-2570 or 1-800-6-CLINIC
Hours: Monday-Friday 3pm-9pm, Saturday 11am-3pm, Sunday 4pm-8pm
Location: 2339 Durant Avenue, Berkeley, CA, 94704
Website: http://www.berkeleyfreeclinic.org

2. Network Therapy - a national mental health network directory to find a local therapist or treatment center
Website: http://www.networktherapy.com/directory/

3. HelpPRO – an online search engine to find individual, family, couples, or group therapy
Website: http://www.helppro.com/

4. Psychology Today – an online listing for psychologists, psychiatrist, therapist, counselors, group therapy, and treatment centers throughout the United States and Canada
Website: http://therapists.psychologytoday.com/rms/prof_search.php

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Demographic Questions
Page 3 of 4

1. Please specify your race. *
Check all that apply.
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ Black
☐ Latino/a
☐ Native American
☐ White
☐ Other: _____

2. Please specify your ethnicity.*
(i.e. Chinese, Mexican, Jewish)

3. Please specify the ethnic/cultural background of each of your childhood primary caregivers.
(i.e. Father – Ethiopian, Foster Mother – Cambodian, Maternal Grandmother – Swedish)

4. Please specify your city, state, country and/or describe the area in which you were raised (i.e. Rural, Small town, Metropolitan, Etc.)

5. For the following, please specify the level of importance to your identity

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant
My Race	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Ethnicity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Culture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Family	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

6. Please specify your attitude toward the following

	Very Proud	Proud	Neutral	Ashamed	Very Ashamed
My Race	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Ethnicity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Culture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My Family	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. What is your immigration generation?

	1st generation (first to immigrate to the United States)	2nd generation (first born in the United States)	3rd generation	4th generation
Mother's Side	☐	☐	☐	☐
Father's Side	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. Please specify your age

9. Please specify your gender
□ Female
□ Male
□ Other: _____

10. Please specify your socioeconomic status (SES)

	Low SES	Middle SES	High SES
Growing up	□	□	□
Current	□	□	□

11. Please specify your religion or spiritual practice

Cooking Questions
Page 4 of 4

12. On average, how much time do you spend cooking each day?
This includes all necessary steps to plan a meal
□ 0-29 minutes
□ 30-59 minutes
□ 1-2 hours
□ 3-4 hours
□ More than 5 hours

13. Please specify how often you _____ meals native to your culture

	Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Cook	□	□	□	□	□
Eat	□	□	□	□	□

14. What are your strongest memories around cooking?

15. What is your favorite thing to cook and why?

16. Who first taught you to cook? What was the context and reason for learning it?

17. During your childhood, how often did you cook with you _____?
Leave blank if does not apply.

	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Siblings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other family members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Currently, how often do you cook with you _____?
Leave blank if does not apply.

	Always	Very often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Parents	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Siblings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other family members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Friends	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. Within the last week, please specify how many of the meals were _____?

5 or less	6-10	11-15	16 or more

Cooked by self	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooked by (or with) other family members	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooked by (or with) friends	☐	☐	☐	☐
Microwaveable	☐	☐	☐	☐
Fast food/Restaurant	☐	☐	☐	☐

20. Is cooking a way you show and receive care? Please explain.

21. Please specify the level of enjoyment of the following:

	Strongly Enjoy	Enjoy	Neutral	Dislike	Strongly Dislike
Cooking (in general)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cooking food from your culture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

22. When I cook a meal, I feel _____.
Check all that apply
☐ Stressed
☐ Comforted
☐ Nostalgic
☐ Disgusted
☐ Festive
☐ Satisfied
☐ Other: _____

23. When I cook a meal native to my culture, I feel _____.
Check all that apply

 Stressed
 Comforted
 Nostalgic
 Disgusted
 Festive
 Satisfied
 Other: _____

24. When I eat a home-cooked meal, I feel _____.
Check all that apply
 Stressed
 Comforted
 Nostalgic
 Disgusted
 Festive
 Satisfied
 Other: _____

25. When I eat a home-cooked meal native to my culture, I feel _____.
Check all that apply
 Stressed
 Comforted
 Nostalgic
 Disgusted
 Festive
 Satisfied
 Other: _____

26. In my life, cooking is _____.
Check all that apply
 Chore
 Hobby
 Gift
 Way to celebrate
 Method of showing care
 Way to feed myself and others
 Hassle
 Way to relax
 Expression of creativity
 Way to bring people together
 Waste of time
 Other: _____

27. Through cooking, I feel connected to _____.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My family	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My culture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

28. Cooking traditions are an important part of _____.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My family	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My culture	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

29. Has cooking affected your family relationships? If so, how?

30. Has cooking affected your cultural identity development? If so, how?

Thank you for your participation in this study!

Appendix B
Recruitment Email to Personal Contacts

Dear (Friends/Classmates/Colleagues),

I am currently looking for participants to complete a survey for my thesis research study exploring the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. Participants must be at least 18 yrs of age and able to read and write in English. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes. I am looking to find participants from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds in order to ensure that many voices are heard in the findings. I would greatly appreciate if you would be willing to help me recruit eligible participants to complete the survey. I have also included a message that you can forward to your personal and professional contacts. Thank you for your time and help!

Tammie Chen

Message to forward to personal and professional contacts:

Hello!

My name is Tammie Chen and I am a graduate student at Smith College School for Social Work. I am currently working on my master's thesis and conducting research on the impact of cooking on family relationships and cultural identity development. I invite you to participate by filling out the survey below and forwarding this email to others who may also be interested in participating. Participants must be at least 18 yrs of age. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. No identifying information will be collected in the survey and submitted information will remain anonymous.

By completing the survey, you will have an opportunity to share your experiences and thoughts about cooking and food. I hope to find participants from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds in order to ensure that many voices are heard in the findings. Responses can provide insight to clinical practitioners, supervisors, and educators on how to implement more holistic, culturally responsive approaches to therapy.

Please feel free contact me with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your help and time!

Tammie Chen
MSW Candidate '13
Smith College School for Social Work
tchen@smith.edu
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

(Link to survey)

Appendix C
Human Subjects Review Approval Letter

SMITH COLLEGE

School for Social Work
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts 01063
T (413) 585-7950 F (413) 585-7994

February 14, 2013

Tammie Chen

Dear Tammie,

Thank you for making all the requested changes to your Human Subjects Review application. Your project is now approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee.

Please note the following requirements:

Consent Forms: All subjects should be given a copy of the consent form.

Maintaining Data: You must retain all data and other documents for at least three (3) years past completion of the research activity.

In addition, these requirements may also be applicable:

Amendments: If you wish to change any aspect of the study (such as design, procedures, consent forms or subject population), please submit these changes to the Committee.

Renewal: You are required to apply for renewal of approval every year for as long as the study is active.

Completion: You are required to notify the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Committee when your study is completed (data collection finished). This requirement is met by completion of the thesis project during the Third Summer.

Good luck with your project.

Sincerely,

Marsha Kline Pruett, M.S., Ph.D., M.S.L.
Acting Chair, Human Subjects Review Committee

CC: Diana Fuery, Research Advisor